

POLITICAL CHRONOLOGY OF THE SARS-COV-2 OUTBREAK IN CHINA

Executive Summary

This study draws on English and Chinese sources to examine the origins of COVID-19. It indicates that a serious biosafety incident occurred at the state-run Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV) of the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) during the second half of 2019.

BACKGROUND

Chinese scientists have been studying coronaviruses since around 2004. The WIV is the center of this research. The WIV opened China's first Biosafety Level 4 lab in 2017 or early 2018. A Chinese firm likely tied to the PLA built the lab using a modified French design after Beijing reneged on its agreement to let a French firm carry out the construction.

In March 2018, the WIV and the EcoHealth Alliance requested DARPA funding to create a coronavirus clone with a furin cleavage site, an important molecular feature that is present in SARS-CoV-2 but no related viruses. DARPA declined the proposal, but that same year, the PRC approved state funding for at least two WIV research projects involving unspecified coronaviruses.

EARLY WARNING SIGNS

In April 2019, the deputy director of the CAS inspected the WIV and stated the need for a facilities upgrade. Throughout the year, the WIV pursued costly projects on its Biosafety Level 3 lab, hazardous waste treatment system, boiler room, ambient air disinfection treatment system, virus storage system, central air conditioning system, unspecified "security services," and air incineration device.

In July 2019, the CCP secretary of the WIV spoke of "current shortcomings and foundational problems in the construction, operation, and maintenance" of the lab complex, and the director of the WIV called staff to "prioritize solving the urgent problems we are currently facing."

GOVERNMENT COVER-UP

On September 12, 2019, the WIV unexpectedly shut down its online virus database in the middle of the night. Six days later, the WIV advised the Wuhan airport on a drill for the outbreak of a "novel coronavirus." On September 21, a Wuhan resident known only as Su died from what a Chinese biostatistician believes may have been COVID-19.

In October 2019, the Chinese legislature reviewed a draft biosecurity law, noting that "currently the biosecurity situation in our country is grim" and listing "laboratories that leak biological agents" as one of several threats.

In November 2019, the Chinese government documented several cases of COVID-19, but kept the matter hidden. CCP officials at the WIV published a report that said: "Once you have opened the stores test tubes, it is just as if having opened Pandora's Box. These viruses come without a shadow and leave without a trace." Seven days later, a Chinese official traveled from Beijing to the WIV to deliver

“important oral and written instructions” from Xi Jinping in response to “the complex and grave situation currently facing safety work.”

INTERNATIONAL DECEPTION

As early as January 2020, Chinese scientists determined that the Wuhan wet market was likely not the origin of SARS-CoV-2. This remains the official position of the Chinese CDC. Meanwhile, in February 2020, the PRC launched a campaign to strengthen biosafety at the WIV and other labs through inspections, stricter regulations, and elimination of unauthorized research. Just as Beijing was denying the possibility that COVID-19 came from a lab on the world stage, it was warning its own officials of such risks and rolling out new measures to prevent lab accidents.

Chinese scientists affiliated with the PLA filed a patent for a COVID-19 vaccine on February 24, 2020. Their research methodology indicates they began work on the vaccine no later than November 2019, nearly two months before Beijing disclosed the existence of SARS-CoV-2.

LAB LEAK CLUES

Finally, it is worth noting that from December 2019 to October 2021, WIV researchers filed patents for inventions meant to address problems with the lab’s differential air pressure system, biocontainment equipment, and waste handling process. Any one of these problems could have allowed a pathogen to escape the lab complex. WIV researchers confirmed this by explaining that their inventions were designed to prevent precisely such a scenario.